

Christian Sincerity :

Described in a

FUNERAL
SERMON

June the First, 1707.

Occasion'd by the DEATH of the Pious
and Reverend

Mr. Thomas Doolittle, M. A.

2 COR. I. 12.

our Rejoycing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience
that in simplicity and Godly sincerity, not with fleshly
Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our
Conversation in this World.

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Minister of the Gospel.

L O N D O N .

Printed and Sold by H. Hills, in Black-Fryars,
near the Water-side, 1707.

Musgrave.

2 COR. i. 12.

For our Rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in this World.

We are met to improve the Death of your excellent Pastor. You have oft heretofore pray'd with success for his Recovery, and praised God for it: but at last the Vessel is broken, that contain'd the precious Treasure, by which you are enrich'd for many years.

I could think of no Subject more for your Benefit, than what this Text presents, and which is inforc'd by his Example who was your Guide.

St. Paul in these words, first acquaints the *Corinthians* what his Comfort was, *when under the Sentence of Death*, ver. 9. and in the repeated Dangers which he had escaped, and hoped to be delivered from, whiles his life was necessary to the Church, not that he expected or desir'd to be always deliver'd, v. 10. for he long'd to be dissolv'd and be with Christ, *as far better for himself*. Phil. i. 23. What hath encourag'd him under foreseen Danger, and gave him hope of Deliverance till his work was finish'd, afforded him a Triumph over Death, when he afterwards beheld it unavoidable and nigh, *I have fought a good fight, I have finish'd my course and kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Thus he rejoiced when he tells you, *I am ready to be offered, &c.* ver. 6.

2dly. Here he assigns also a Reason why the Saints ought to thank God for his prolonged Life, and continue to pray for it. ver. 10. For tho' their concern for him did not afford him that great Joy, which he received from the Testimony of his Conscience; yet being he was a Person so upright and useful, and had his Conscience testifying it, even in sight of Death, and rejoiced in that Testimony above all worldly Advantages; his Life must needs be valuable, and his Death be a loss fit to affect the Church, and to be matter of Sorrow, if not for a while prevented by their Supplications. He further hints, that Prayers for such a Man were likely to be accepted, yea and be successful for the time his Ministry was design'd for use.

I might desire this last Head to excite People to pray for faithful Ministers when their Lives are in hazard, whether by Persecutors, Diseases, or otherwise: And to be as willing to offer hearty Thanksgivings to God, when he preserves their Lives. Nor were it improper to call Ministers to be so useful and faithful, that People may be inclined to pray for them, and that with hope of Success. But I proceed to the Text, where St. Paul speaking of himself, tho' in the Plural Number, gives us,

I. The Character of every true Christian in his Station, and more especially in that of the Ministry.

II. The way by which this becomes evident to one's self; this is by the Testimony of his own Conscience, especially then awakened by a serious Prospect of Death.

III. The Joy this, when evidenc'd, affords in the nearest Prospect of Death and Dangers. This is his rejoicing.

I. *The Character of every true Christian, in his Station, and more especially that of his Ministry.* What the Apostle mentions of himself as witnessed by his Conscience, is essential to all true and real Christians in their respective places; and profess'd by all such, as well as by them who are dispensers of the Gospel. But the Sphere of a Minister's Motion being larger, and more difficult, his Fidelity is more tried; his Work, Temptations, Opportunities, and Dangers are far greater; he has not only the common Duties of a private Christian to discharge, but those also which are proper for his Office. Therefore to have acquitted himself faithfully therein, is matter of great Joy, and this from the greater hazard of unfaithfulness, as well as from the hope of higher Rewards, if his trust be uprightly discharged.

1. Obs. *To have a Conversation in this World, not by fleshly Wisdom, but in Simplicity, Godly Sincerity, and by the Grace of God, is the Property of every real Christian and Godly Minister.*

My principal work under this Head, will be to explain the Character in the several parts of it. The Doctrine expresseth the necessity of it, when I call it the Property of every true Christian; for this imports, he is not a real, but only a nominal Christian, to whom it belongs not. That this Truth needs explication, the behaviour of most who wear a Christian Name may convince you; for surely they have very false Notions of it, or they could not so generally pretend to the Christian hope, when

so few lead this Conversation ; yea, when most deride it as a mean thing, and visibly contradict it by falsehood, Tricking, carnal selfishness, and the Prostitution of Sacred Things to vile purposes, as openly as if they scorn'd a disguise, after any vile turn is Inter serv'd. A Heathen would abhor that Juggling and insincerity nor g which is so commonly practised, as to cease to be a Wonder. This ever Evil I would detect and expose, by explaining a true Christian *Rom* Conversation in opposition thereto ; and shall treat of it, as what's make the Character of every Christian as such ; because it may be of more extensively beneficial, and may be easily improved by Mi- He i nisters in what's peculiar to them : For they can be no Godly Mi- wick nisters, who be not real Christians ; and if they be real Christians, their sincerity will extend to the faithful Discharge of their speci- Bloo al Office. The Character to be insisted on, does not only oppose set b that of the openly Prophane, but the several excellencies of it far exceed what meer nominal Christians do practice or arrive at, think yea are opposite thereto as contraries : And I shall chuse to dis- 2. tinguish faithful Believers from Hypocrites, rather then from the Men notoriously wicked, by the several parts of the Character, which are four ; one Negative, and three Positive.

1. The true Christian's Conversation is not by *Fleshy Wisdom*.
2. His Conversation is in Simplicity and *Godly Sincerity*.
3. The scope and tenure of his Conversation in this World is so.
4. All this is by the Grace of God.

1. *The true Christians Conversation is not by fleshly Wisdom.*
Other Negatives are implied in the Text, as Double-mindedness, Insincerity, Partiality, Inconstancy, Morality meerly natural ; but he mentions only this of *Fleshy Wisdom*, because ever this is so reputable with the World, this is so commonly manifested, this includs much of the others, and is the most likely and greatest general ground of all base and hypocritical Practices.

Hypocrites do walk by *fleshy Wisdom*, whatever Pretence they make to the Spirit : This forms their Temper, fixeth their ^{at} Ends, and directs their Course and Methods : This, and not ^{Mar} Spiritual Wisdom ; this, and not the Word of God, is their light the and rule. But the faithful Christian walks not by *fleshy Wis-* scrip dom, nay he acteth contrary to it.

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1. He walks not by fleshly Wisdom: He pursues not that turn interest as his chief good, which the Wisdom of the Flesh prefers; sincerity nor guides his Practice by the Maxims of carnal Politicks, however celebrated. He'll not do Evil, that good may come of it.

Christian Rom. 3. 8. He gives Honour to the great, but they shall not what make his Creed, nor direct his Conscience, *Act. 4. 19.* He wishes to pay benefit well to the Multitude, but runs not with them to do evil.

by Mi. He is diligent for a Subsistence, but dares not sell his Soul by wicked Courses to gain the World. He *consults not Flesh and Christians, Blood, Gal. 1. 6.* whether he must perform his Duty; no, nor suffers Flesh to determine what is his Duty: God's Statutes are oppose set before him, *Psal. 18. 22.* as the Rule by which he is resolved to act, and justly with *Paul*, accounts such injurious, who live at think of him *as if he walked according to the Flesh, 2 Cor. 10. 2.*

to di- 2. The real Christian's actings are contrary to the Wisdom from of the Flesh.

acter. The World brands him for a Fool, because he sacrificeth his Secular Interests to his Fidelity to Christ, and Postpones them to his heavenly hopes in his solicitous Cares and Labour. He, with Moses, *buseth to suffer rather Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin; and esteems the Reproaches of world is Christ greater Riches, than the Treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 25,*

26. The Wisdom of the Flesh directs him to believe no more than he can comprehend by Reason, but he'll believe what God has reveal'd by the Word, tho' above his Comprehension. That Wisdom invents Modes of Worship which are plausible and pompous, but he will abide by Christ's institutions; *Col. 2. 2.* however plain or mean they appear to Flesh. *Col. 2. 18.* That Wisdom decries all as unnecessary to Religion, which exposeth to great Labour, Charge or Danger; but he abhors the Maxims, which would abate the utmost Pains, Expence or Affliction, that attends the power of vital Religion, which he knows to be contrary to the indulging of the Flesh. The Wisdom this good Man is govern'd by, is of another sort, and repugnant to that of light the Flesh; even that which is from above, *Jam. 1. 8.* and described. Under the Conduct thereof he despiseth the Wisdom of the Flesh, as sensual and devilish, yea, as what he is sure will be found at last to be consummate Folly.

2. *The Conversation of the true Christian is in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity.*

This part is most directly opposite to Hypocrisie ; and the life and frame of the false Christian is the plain Reverse of it in every particular ; he is double-minded as to God and Man. He has a *Heart that is double*, Jam. 1. 8. for he serves ambitious, covetous, voluptuous Purposes, under Spiritual pretences, and most friendly Assurances. Instead of Simplicity, which he abhors, he is doubling and deceitful. Dissimulation he is clothed with, Sincerity he is a Stranger to. Hold his best Actions to the Sun, and they'll appear grossly faulty, tho' now under disguise ; his Prayers are without Faith and Fervour : His Charitable Works are without love. Were all Secrets manifest, as they will be in the day of Judgment, the Hypocrite wou'd be hateful to all ; and the more so, for his Cloak of Godliness. How full of allow'd Enmity, Self-confidence, Envy, Pride, Atheistical thoughts, aversion to Duty, Covetousnes are these *painted Sepulchres*, Mat. 23. 27. as Christ calls them. He who will judge the Secrets of Men, can charge them with lying, Cheating, mocking at Sin, quarrelling with Providence, contempt of serious Religion, and gratifying one Lust or other. Sometimes they are perceived by others to be in the *Gall of bitterness*, and bonds of Iniquity, Acts 8. 21. to which they contribute by their Prophane expressions of Divine things, carnal Compliances when tempted, and their final Apostacy when tried by a great Bribe, or severe Persecution. But the Conversation of a sound Believer is,

1. *In Simplicity.* ἐν αὐτλεπτυ, what he does is in singleness of heart, Eph. 6. 5. he is what he seems, he meaneth what he saith, his designs are honest, his Eye is single, Luke 11. 34. he may be trusted for he will not deceive. He is as Jacob a plain Man, Gen. 25. 29. he intends to be what he professeth; and to do what he engageth to God and Man ; he is a Nathaniel, in whom there is no guile allowed, John 1. 47. he instances simplicity, in his chief end, which is the Glory of God ; in his governing rule, which is alone the word of God ; and in not having regard to any iniquity in his heart. He is candid and open, abhorring all unjust reservations and equivocations, when his Prudence is most fully exercis'd. His Charity is apt to make him too credulous, for he judging by himself hopeth the best of all Men.

2. *In Sincerity.* This Word is of near alliance with the former : ἐν εἰλιμπλεια, in its derivation signifies a thing that will bear

bear the Light of the Sun-beams, when examined ; and not prove counterfeited or unvaluable : It's joyn'd with Truth, *Let us keep the Fast with the unleavened bread of Sincerity and Truth.* 1 Cor. 5. 8. We are instructed by this Word, that the Conversation of a true Christian is so real, so just, so well-ordered, as will bear the search, and be approv'd upon strict examination : whence in Gospel-acceptation the upright Man is called a perfect Man, his Mind is pure, *Psal. 37. 7.* his Graces are not Counterfeits but Realities. Job 1. 1. He believes with the Heart, with the Faith unfeined 1 Pet. 3. 1. He loves God and Christ, and his Brethren, in truth and in deed Rom. 10. 9. There's that of Reality in his Graces and Obedience, as answers the Gospel-Rule, 2 Tim. 1. 5. 1. John 3. 18. whereby it fixeth the condition of its saving benefits, tho' they reach not the extent of what's his Duty by Precepts of the Gospel.

This Christian is so upright, that he desires *God to search his inwards,* Ps. 139. 23. as he appeals to God as to the way he takes, *O Lord thou knowest,* Jer. 15. 15, 16. As he approves himself chiefly to God in what he undertakes ; so in many cases he is forced, and may say with St. Paul, *God is my witness.* 1 Thess. 2. 5.

The best Man indeed is very short of legal Perfection ; were God strict to mark iniquities, and judged us by the Law of works, no Man could stand at the Bar before him, nor be justified in any performance or attainment, *Psal. 130. 3.* his Person, his best Actions and most improved Graces, need forgiveness for their imperfections ; and the Merits of Christ to make them acceptable. He is sincere in his humble acknowledgment of this, his Heart is truly broken in the sense of his guilt and many defects. He really admires the riches of Grace, and from his Soul esteems and relisheth spiritual Blessings, as most agreeable to his desires, wants and inclinations. Sincerity is that which he mindeth, as that without which all his seeming Graces are nullities, and greatest performances vain. This the weakest Saint is not without, for his prevailing Judgment and Choice are for God; as his chief end ; for Christ. as his only Saviour ; for Heaven and Covenant Blessings, as his chief good, and for Gospel-Obedience and Holiness as the Perfection of his Nature; and the way to possess eternal Blessings.

His principal regards to God in his Actions do further instance this Sincerity, for he is awed by the Eye of God when alone, as if observed by a Multitude; as he makes conscience of his secret Actions, Gen. 39. 9. yea of his very thoughts as well as of publick Actions, he approves himself to God, Psal. 119. 113. and is satisfied with his approbation wherein he is censured by Men. And his principal care is to please God whether Men be pleased or no. Gal. 1. 10.

3. This Simplicity and Sincerity is Godly, τὸς ἀριστος, the Simplicity and Sincerity of God. If you take it for an *Hebraism* (which the Apostle oft useth) it notes the eminency and excellency, as well as the reality of these; but if you take it in the common Sence, it notes an Integrity, of which God is the exemplar, appointer, author and approver. The Christian in his measure is conformable to God, who is good and upright. Psal. 25.

1. His perfect Holiness, Truth, Righteousness and Goodness, include what is Simplicity and Sincerity in Men. The Blessed God hath commanded this, and by his Spirit creates it in the Elect. Ezek. 56. 26. The new heart which he gives, is a new and honest Mind, whence the Power of upright ends, and an inclination to honest Methods proceed. Sincerity is what God highly approves; he loveth it as his own Image, and thereby distinguisheth his peculiar Servants in order to future Rewards; *Gladness is sown for the upright in heart, They shall dwell in his Presence,* Psal. 97. 11. Psal. 111. 13. whereas the Hypocrite is an abomination to him, and the hottest flames of Hell will be his Portion. Tit. 1. 16. The Gospel as a Rule of Judgment determins the final state of Professors, not meerly as being Sinners, for all are so; Mat. 24. 57. nor yet as perfect and sinless, for none are such: But who are sincere, who are hy pocritical Professors, by this shall they be discriminated. Much more might be added, to convince you that Sincerity is no mean, dead, formal thing; but that it is of a Divine Nature, Alliance, Original and Tendency.

3. The Scope and Tenour of a Christian Conversation in this World, is in Simplicity and Godly sincerity, &c.

The Scope and Course of it is so, and not an occasional step; 'tis so, notwithstanding all the Discouragements in this World; and for the whole time he abides in it.

The Hypocrite's Religion and Obedience is limited, partial and uneven ; he is devout, just or good, but by the by, 'tis not his Business; for that's to gratify his Lusts. His Goodness is by starts, 'tis not his stated walk ; for his Conversation is in his Lusts, his walk is after the Flesh; Eph. 2. 3. Rom. 8. 13. He is seemingly improv'd in some things, but hath not regard to all the parts of Godliness ; such calls to Service he complies with, as are enforc'd by secular Advantages, but without these, the plainest Calls are generally disobey'd : He may be somewhat exact in some Duties, but neglects the most material in the Station where GOD has plac'd him. Towards some Men ; and in some Company, he behaves himself well ; but is disorderly with others. When he meets not with Temptations, he seemeth reform'd, but changeth his course when strongly assaulted, and seldom recovers ; His goodness is as the Morning Cloud, Hos. 13. 3. it has no root, therefore dies before his Life is finish'd.

But in the real Christian, Sincerity runs as a Line throughout his Life, and commands the Scope of it upon all Occasions ; the Words are αὐτὸς ἐγὼ μηδὲ εἰ ταῦτα ποσμῶ. We convers'd, liv'd, and behav'd, in a continu'd stated manner, in our passage thro' the World, in godly Sincerity. This is an eminent part of the Character of a real Christian, and amounts to these fix Things.

1. His great Business is to keep a good Conscience. *Herein I exercise my self to have always a Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards Men.* Act. 24. 16. This, he resolveth, and studies how to do it ; this he earnestly intends, by striving against what may hinder it, and taking hold of whatever is helpful to maintain Religion towards G O D, and Righteousness towards Men ; he is at pains to have Conscience well inform'd, and is careful to secure his Peace, by avoiding what it justly condemns ; 'tis his purpose to be able to say, *My Heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.* Job 27. 6.

2. He endeavoureth to perform every Duty, as well as some ; he faithfully sets himself to be holy in all manner of Conversation. 1. Pet. 1. 15. No Grace nor measure of it wou'd he neglect, nor live in the omission of any known Duty ; he accounts himself oblig'd to keep his Heart, as well as outward Actions, to forgive his Enemies, as well as to require his Friends. Prov. 4. 23. The Duties of his general and particular Calling he will be employ'd in, as one walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless. Luk. 1. A sincere Veneration of each is witness'd by his rejecting of none ; he allows not himself by sloth to fall into any Error against the Faith, nor to violate the Law by disregard to any of its Precepts ; but keeps an Ear open to all G O D's Commands, tho' hard

and chageable Service be appointed. Is he a Minister? He declares the whole Counsel of G O D, whoever is displeas'd; Acts 20. 27. he and corrupts not the Word of G O D to serve a base Turn; but as of integrity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speketh he in Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 17. by Rule he behaveth himself in the House of God, 1 Tim. viii. 3. 15. the same does the private Christian in all Relations, and not but hides his Face from no part of his Duty.

3. The Scope and Tenour of his Behaviour is sincere; as Enoch he walks with God, Gen. 5. 22. and labours to be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long; his Zeal is consistent with Love, and Charity does not extinguish his Zeal; his Religion is not by fits, but steady; sincerity is his way of living, as Pray for us, for we trust we have a good Conscience in all things, willing to live honestly, clean Heb. 13. 18. His Way is Uniform, and Righteousness is his Custom; if he turn aside, he bemoaneth it, and is restless till he return; he prays that G O D would heal his backslidings, and restore him; his Religion is not left in the Church, Ps. 41. 4. but walk carry'd with him to his House, to his Closet, to his Shop, to every place; Hos. 14. 2. his Godliness ends not with the Sabbath, but takes hold on him thro' the Week; he is good in Health, as well as in Sicknes; and he acteth sincerely with all Men, as well as with some Men; his guard is as strict in wicked Company, as if the holiest Men were present, he'll not offend his weak Brother, Ps. 39. 1. but deny himself in much of his Liberty, rather than be a Snare to him. Power gives him no leave to Oppress; 1 Cor. 8. 12. 13. he with-holds not what's Right from the worst Man, no not from his Enemies; he dare not impose on the Ignorant, but deals as justly with such, as if they were Persons of the deepest Understanding.

Objection, How then comes the Apostle to say in this Text, That his Conversation was in sincerity more abundantly towards the Corinthians?

Answer, He laboureth abundantly among this People in the Work of the Gospel, and yet was so far from any mercenary Design, that he supported himself by the work of his Hands, when he had a Right to a supply from them: So that they, of all Men, had least reason to question his Integrity. 1 Cor. 9. 12--15.

5. He will act with Sincerity under the greatest Temptations and Disadvantages.

This World is full of Snares and Allurements; its Company, its Business, its Amusements are not without hazard. This is a Place where Religion is generally abhorred, and Men persecuted for the Profession of it; the Helps to Piety are very few, and a plain Man is generally scorn'd, and made a prey of. This World is so full of Sharpers, that honest Methods will not always give a Livelihood;

27. he and Men of all Callings so false and undermining, that a Man of integrity cannot defend himself : Yet as bad as this World is, and as ill treatment as the Man of Simplicity meets with, the Apostle Tim. saith, My Conversation is in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not by fleshly wisdom, even *in this World*. Every real Christian follows his Example, in prospect of the Comfort it ministers through Enoch, the Usefulness of it to the Common-weal, and G O D's approbation of it by his Commands, Example, and Rewards.

Therefore the Sincere Man labours to keep himself *unspotted from all filthiness*, *the World*; when the Wicked entice him, he despairs the Bribes, and watches against the Allurements of Sin. With *Lot* he keeps honestly clean in a filthy place, and is vexed with the Abominations he sees. *Cu-* wou'd reform, but cannot. 2 Pet. 2. 7. He is content to be gazed at as a Monster among the bewitched Crowd, and to pass thro' the World as a Stranger, who wears a Garb, speaks a Language, but walks by a Law, is accustom'd to such Manners, pursues such Designes, and seeks a Home, as the World despises and abhors.

Sincerity inclines him to the *Crucifying himself to the World*, and thereby to deny such Gratifications of the Flesh as would pollute him; and to bear what's most ungrateful to it, rather than seeme ashamed of Christ in his Truth, Interest or Members. When Reproaches, Frowns, loss of Goods, Prisons, yea Death come in his way, he has reckon'd on them, and counts them no strange thing; but he is at a point, the *Lamb he will follow*, his Covenant he must keep. Rev. 24. 4. He endeavoureth to get, and use Prudence, and to avoid all real Indiscretion, that he may prevent such Mischiefs as ill Men design against him, and are more probable to effect, because they scruple nothing : In this Case, where innocent Prudence will not preserve him, he commits himself to GOD for shelter and support, as seems good in his Eyes. Finally, He is diligent in his Calling, but reckons, that G O D thinks that enough for him, which is gotten honestly, and that more wou'd be dangerous. He is thankful for so much Esteem and Interest as may render him greatly useful; but he'll use no unjust or sordid Methods, to obtain or continue it. And if G O D permit Men of baser Tempers to undermine him by Whispers, Surmises, or viler Arts; he refers himself to the Providence of G O D, as knowing he will vindicate him as far as the Service design'd by him requires, and carry on his Work by other Instruments, accepting the upright desire and behaviour of the Blasted, instead of Service.

6. He maintains his sincere Conversation to the last.

He is Faithful unto Death. Whilst he is in this *World*, he continues his Integrity, Rev. 2. 10. and holds on his way; a prolong'd Life gives him no release, for his Covenant dedication was unto

his last Moments. During his present State he adheres to G O D, abides in C H R I S T, submits to his Rule, and desireth to serve his Purposes. The real Christian is persuaded, that beginning well without Perseverance, will aggravate his woe, and that all who shall be Saved, must endure to the end. Matt. 24. 13. Therefore he is firmly resolv'd in the Strength of Christ, to finish well, and Dye in the L O R D. His Race being for Life, he runs, and faints not, His Warfare not being decided before Death, he fights so as to overcome at last. His earnest Prayer and Hope is to be sincere, and without offence, till the Day of Christ. Phil. 1. 10. He is not without a holy Fear till he hath worked out his Salvation. Phil. 2. 12. He is watchful till his time of Probation is finish'd, that his Heart depart not from G O D, that he be not entangled in the pollutions of the World, that he turn not from the holy Commandment, nor desert the Profession of Faith. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. He is careful to leave this World, prepar'd and ripen'd for a better Country; Heb. 10. 23. and therefore thinks it not enough to be kept from Apostacy, but endeavoureth by adding Grace to Grace, to make his Election sure; and so to have a certain and an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The 4th part of the Caracter of the real Christian and godly Minister, is, That his Conversation is by the Grace of God. 1 Pet. 5.

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The Grace of G O D is taken chiefly for his *special Favour*; He help'd them much who has believed through Grace: Acts 18. 27. Also, for the peculiar Gifts and Effects of G O D's special Favour, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Grow in Grace*. We have received Grace for Grace. 1 John 1. 16. All Saving Endowments are call'd Grace, because they are free Gifts flowing from G O D's undeserv'd Favour, and are Evidences of our Interest in his special Favour. Sometimes this word Grace is design'd at once to express both the Kindness of G O D and the Effects. *He resisteth the proud, but giveth Grace to the humble*. 'Tis also taken for the Gospel. These are the principal Senses of the Grace of G O D; and what the Apostle intendeth. As for *extraordinary Gifts*, and the *common effects* of Grace for degrees of Reformation, which are short of a Regenerating Work; they are stil'd Grace, but reach not the Apostle's sense in my Text; whereas, 1. G O D's special Favour. 2. Inherent Grace. And 3. The Gospel must be intended.

This part consummates the distinction between the sincere Christian, and the Hypocrite. What the Christian is, what he attains and performs is by the Grace of G O D; he is more than a meer Moral Man, as to Temper and State, and acteth beyond him, and with another respect to supplies of Grace: Of which hereafter.

The Hypocrite's devoutest and best Actions spring from Nature; or at best from Common Grace: Nor is he an *Object* of G O D's special Kindness, or is G O D's Favour what he *most* desires. His Graces or Virtues are call'd so but *equivocally*: When he performs what's most excellent, 'tis not from a vital Principle; the Holy Spirit gives no such *special* assistance, as to Saints: His Heart is unchang'd, his Spirit unrenew'd; he derives not strength from Christ by *dependance* on him, as a vital Head; nor acteth by Communications from him, as an *united* Member. As G O D has no delight in him, so he takes not his highest Satisfaction in G O D; but his *chief good* is what gratifies his Carnal-self, which is his chief and ultimate End. And thus its evident, he doth not live, nor behave (so the Word for Conversing in my Text is oft render'd) by the Grace of G O D.

But the real Christian hath his Conversation by the Grace of G O D,

1. *By the special Favour of God.*

Note, That G O D is of Infinite Power to change, convert, establish and assist, &c. This Power is exerted in such Spiritual Operations; *as we believe by this Power, we are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* Eph. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 5. But if you ask, How the Power of G O D comes to be exerted to such Purposes? I answer, It is from his special Favour in Christ; and this is the way all comes to be ascribed to his Grace or Favour. This puts his Arm to work, and opens those Treasures, whence the Saint is supplied and furnish'd for a Godly Conversation. The Christian liveth by this special Favour of God.

1. *As this acteth in him.* It's this which works those holy Inclinations, and divine Qualities, whereby the Christian is inwardly renew'd, and disposed to walk with G O D. 2 Thess. 1. 11, 12.

This mortifies the Flesh, and dethrones those Lusts which had Dominion in him, and would soon recover it but for his Grace.

This gives us necessary assistance for resisting Temptations to alter our Course, and for performing those Duties wherein our walk consisteth. All the Christian's Graces are derived hence, and by this excited and maintained. When he is hard put to, the *Grace of G O D is sufficient for him, and his strength made perfect in weakness.* 2 Cor. 12. 9. Is the Christian strong? it's in this Grace that is in Christ.

Had G O D never visited us with his Favour, this Saint had continued dead in his Sins, and *without strength*. Did his Favour cease to act, he would soon faint, be overcome, and again wallow in the Mire. It's this Grace by which he stands; this by its Blessing succeeds all means of Perseverance. 2 Pet. 2. 20.

2. *He liveth by this special Favour of G O D, as it acteth for him.*

This chaineth the Tempter, who else would soon overcome and overwhelm us. This Grace moderates our Trials, shortens our Exercises, proportions our Burthens, suits our Conditions and Circumstances, as may be safest and most helpful to our Souls. This provides the means of Grace, this finds seasonable helpers for Counsel and Encouragement, and dispenseth Afflictions and Mercies, as our frames makes awakening Warnings or Encouragements most proper for our Edification. Rom. 8. 28.

3. He lives by this Grace, as it is affectingly manifested to him.

GOD is pleased to *shed his Love* abroad in the Heart, to a Believer's feeling. Rom. 5. 5. This sweetens the bitterest Steps. The *Consolations of Christ* abounding, support the Soul under Persecutions. When he grows remiss, a sense of what kindness GOD has expressed towards him, does awaken him to avoid what is offensive and dishonourable to the blessed GOD, and constrain him to be active and faithful. 2 Cor. 1. 5.

He cannot behold what wonders *have been produced* by the Favour of GOD, without a blush, that he makes no better returns. Has my GOD bestow'd his Son, and has Christ died for me when I was an Enemy? Has he by his Spirit raised me from a dead state, and found me out when I was running farther from him? Has he pardon'd such a Word of Sins? Has he united me to the Lord JESUS, and Adopted me among his Sons, &c. and can I forsake him? GOD for bid. I am ashamed that my Zeal is so cold, and that I cannot walk more worthy of him. A believing prospect of the great things which *Grace has provided* for him hereafter, does enlarge his Heart, and establish his goings. These are things too Glorious for the Eye to behold, too great for Tongue to utter, or the vastest Imagination to conceive. *We know not what we shall be, that we shall be like Christ, and see him as he is,* 1 John 3. 2. contains all we can desire or be capable of. Some glimpses and foretastes of these things repair the Christian's Strength, and enrage his Resolutions. He answers Temptations with this thought, the Flesh can offer no such Benefits as these which I hope for; no, nor as those, which I already enjoy: The Light of GOD's Countenance, the Communion I have with Christ, surpasses all this World can give. How then can I depart from this Blessed One, when I have tasted he is thus gracious, 1 Pet. 2. 3. and also when he is so good as to Pardon my many Infirmitie, accept such imperfect Service, and grant a free access to this Throne of Grace, for Grace and Mercy to help in every time of need? Heb. 4. 16. Surely these must incline and encourage me to follow his Steps, and persist in his Ways.

2dly, The Christian Conversation is by *Inherent Grace*, flowing from that special Love of G O D.

The Christian's Conversation is not by fleshly Wisdom, but it is in Sincerity, by that Grace which is *subjectively* in the Believer.

1. This *Inherent Grace* constitutes a great part of the Christian's Conversation, especially Godwards. The prevalency of a Spiritual Life, to the exclusion of the Dominion of the Flesh, is what denominates a sincere Person. He is not *in the Flesh*, which every unconverted Person is. The truth and reality of Regeneration (whence this Life begins) is instanc'd in the *true Fear of G O D*, *a sincere Faith in Christ*, and *a prevalent Love to G O D*. Rom. 7. 5. These Graces in Truth, are not only necessary to our behaving well to Men, but as it regards the frame and bent of the Heart; the internal Exercise of these are a part of the Divine Life and Conversation.

It's not a Conversation which leaves out the Pulse, the Bent, the Cravings and Motions of the Heart Godward; for it is with him we have most to transact and do. Every act of Grace towards G O D, makes up our living to him; yea, the habitual Disposition is what he looks at, as much as at our Exercise. *My Son give me thy Heart.* Prov. 23. 26.

2. A Heart renew'd by Grace depends on Christ for all Supplies necessary to a Christian Conversation.

Where Grace his implanted, the Soul is sensible of its own insufficiency to make any Progress in G O D's Ways. Whatever confidence the Hypocrite has in his own Stock, the real Christians own, *Not that we are sufficient as of our selves to think a good thought*; 2 Cor. 3. 5. Much less to resist strong Temptations, bear heavy Sufferings, or perform spiritual Duties in a right manner. He heartily assents to what Christ declares, *Without me you can do nothing.* John 5. 1. 5. Therefore as he is solicitous to acquit himself a true Disciple of Christ, so his Eye is directed to him, to instruct and enable him to do so. He depends on him, and seeks to him for continual Assistance and Supports. He concludes he shall manage his Ways aright in proportion to what Supplies are communicated. *He can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him.* Phil. 4. 13.

3. By the Exercise of *Inherent Grace*, the *external Conversation* of a Christian is managed and maintain'd in Sincerity.

As outward Duties are dead and empty things, wherein no Grace is in act; so a Godly Conversation were impracticable, were not all Graces in exercise. The influences of the Spirit in order to Practice, are immediately on the Heart, for the exciting and strength-

ning the Graces he had there produc'd ; and those excited and strengthened, do enable to Godly and Upright actings. *Faith* represents G O D's Majesty and Authority to the Mind, which beget that Reverence for his Commands as renders us *Obedient* against all the Threatnings of Men, and the Reluctancy of our Hearts.

Faith realizeth and invisible World, whereby we are animated to endure all Sufferings which attend our Profession, awaken'd to avoid what leads to Hell, and fixed in the way which by divine Ordination brings us to Glory. By *Faith* we rely on Christ, and derive Vertue from him, whereby we are enabled to forsake what he came to *destroy*, and perform his Demands, expressive of our fidelity to him, and *Obedience* to the Father. 2 Cor. 4. 18. *Love* in exercise enlargeth our Hearts in designs for the Glory of G O D, in fear of offending him ; this makes his *Yoke* *easy*, and all his Commands desirable, and not *grievous*. By *Humility* we stoop to the meanest Duties ; by *Patience* we are kept from Repining at what we endure in our Christian Course ; and by *Fortitude* the Difficulties and Dangers attending us are master'd.

The *hope* of Glory guards us against Assaults, and so fills us with a Contempt of this World, that its offers cannot entice us to turn out of our way. *Godly Fear* checks our Vanity, Inconsiderateness and Security, that they betray us not to Sensuality and Sloth. And by *Repentance* we recover from our Falls, and are made more cautious of offending. None of the Graces of the Spirit are useless, all of them are active and influential, to render our Conversation sincere and persevering.

4. A Heart principled with the Graces of the Spirit, takes it greatest Satisfaction in G O D, as the most agreeable Good.

His loving Kindness is better than Life, Psal. 63. 3. in the esteem of every gracious Soul. He blesseth himself in what he enjoys of G O D, and *pantes* for more. A Man thus disposed must be careful so to order his Ways as to *keep in his Love*, and be afraid of all Sin, lest he Forfeit the Favour of G O D, or intermit the discoveries of it.

A Christian finds that usually he enjoys more or less of G O D, as his Conversation is managed : When this is *ordered aright*, G O D *sheweth him his Salvation*. Psal. 50. 23. He communicates of it what we need or can bear at present, and grants such discoveries of what is reserved, as fills the Soul with Joy. A Man admiring and affected with these Delights, is not only afraid to lose them by Sin, but feels himself constrain'd to appear for G O D with zeal, and abound in the Fruits of Holiness. But, on the other hand, he finds when he sinneth *presumptuously*, his Bones are *broken*, Joy removed, the Face of G O D is *hid*, Ps. 57. 8. the Visits of the

Spirit,

Spirit more rare, and his Operations more faint; whereby his Soul becomes weakned as to Grace, and almost overwhelmed as to Comfort.

The Experiences of these things contribute greatly to a faithful Walk. They cannot do otherwise with a gracious Person; for nothing can please him, whilst he suspects his Interest in God, who is his Portion, and this not only by a wise choice, but as the Bent and Inclination of his Heart is fixed on God; for in him it finds true rest as in its Centre; in him it glorieth, whatever it can want or suffer. And from a well-pleasing Sense of God's Love, it must act with Vigour and Caution too.

3dly, The Christian's Conversation is in Sincerity by the Gospel, which is the word of God's Grace. It's so called *Acts 14. 3.* and justly, for it's a wonderful Gift and effect of Divine Favour; yea, it's term'd the Grace of God. *Tit. 2. 11.* The Gospel contributes many ways to our having our Conversation in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity.

1. As the Gospel contains the Rule of this Conversation. Our Lord Jesus hath taken into the Christian dispensation all the Laws by which his sincere followers are to fashion their Hearts and Lives. The Godly Man conforms himself to these. He rests not with any attainments as Graces, except they be what the Gospel describes to be such Graces; what comes short of, or exceeds its Definitions, he rejects as Counterfeits.

He avoids nothing as Sin, but what the Word forbids; nor accounts that a Duty, which it does not some way or other enjoy. But he is as concern'd to keep both to their full extent, that so no part of Duty may be refused, nor Sin of any kind or in any degree allow'd.

He rejects all false Rules and Enthusiastick Opinions, however plausible; and admits not that as part of the Law of Nature, which contradicts the Gospel-Rule. By this he tries all prudent Maxims, however celebrated; the Counsel and Customs of Men whatever Reputation they have; and the Laws of the Church and of Magistrates, whatever be their Sanction. By examining all by this Rule, and yielding a sincere Obedience to it, he avoids what contradicts, and performs what's requisite to a Conversation in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity.

2. As the Gospel includes the proper Motives to a sincere Conversation.

The Christian needs Arguments to persuade him to embrace and abide in a Course that is contrary to the Flesh, and that exposes him to Labour and Sufferings. He finds in the Gospel such Arguments as are suited to this purpose, and by them he is oft made willing to cross the Flesh; and stirred up to persevering Endeavours after eminent Holiness, as what's justifiable and beneficial. - The Motives are not Carnal or Impure, but chiefly Spiritual and Divine, whereby they are agreeable to a renewed, Nature, and apt to promote holy Resolutions.

Here you find Arguments from God's Nature, Perfections, Providence and Authority; from Christ's Love, Sufferings, and Intercession; from his Designs, Assurances, and his final Judgment. *By the Gospel, Life and Immortality are brought to light.*

2 Tim. 1. 10. All this display'd Glory strongly excites: All the promised Blessings for Time and Eternity are so many Topsicks, whence inforging Motives are deducted. The Christian knowing the inviolable Connexion between a godly Conversation and these Blessings, feels a Power in these as Motives to lead that Conversation; neither are Gospel-Threatnings unapt to this end.

3. As the Gospel discovers things helpful to this Conversation, and what are Impediments to it.

Here we are directed how to pray, hear, approach the Lord's Table, meditate, examine our selves, and offer thanks to God; all which are Means which the Christian improves for quickning and establishment in his Walk. We have the Experiences and Behaviour of Saints recorded, that we may follow their Steps.

Heb. 12. 1. The perfect Example of our Lord Jesus is set before us, for the fashioning of our Hearts, and the ordering of our Lives **Phil. 2. 5.** Let the same Mind be in you which was in Christ; looking to Jesus, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the Shame. **Heb. 12. 2.** Learn of me, for I am Meek. **Matth. 11. 29.** The Christian Armour is fully described **Ephes. 6. 11.** Many other helps might be mentioned, which upright Souls are acquainted with, and have used successfully.

The Impediments of a sincere Conversation, are to be seen in the recover'd falls of Saints, the Apostacy of Professors; and in Scripture warnings and Cautions. By these we are taught to beware of Self-Confidence, Trifling, Idleness, Neglect of Du-

Rashness, letting-down our Watch, not avoiding Occasions of Sin, loving the World, fear of Man, disregarding the first Degrees of Backslidings, evil Company, and Hypocrisie of heart. The account you also have of Satan's violent and wily Methods, is a great help to prevent his polluting our Conversation.

4. As the Spirit of Christ communicates his gracious Influences by the Gospel.

We should soon be entangled, faint, and turn aside to crooked Paths, if left to our own Abilities. The Gospel-Discoveries and Directions are of themselves insufficient to cleanse and establish our Hearts and Ways: But the Efficacy of the Gospel to these holy ends, is by the Spirit's Concurrence; and its Glory is, that the Blessed Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ, communicates Life, Light and Power thereby: it's the *Ministration of this Spirit.* Cor. 3. 8. By this it becomes the Power of God unto Salvation. Romans the 1st, and the 16th. The Upright oft feels surprizing energy in the Word, which has made him strong to resist Temptations, when probable to overcome him; and supported him under such suffering as he thought he could never endure. It is to the Holy Spirit working by the Truth of the gospel, such things must be ascribed; he conveyeth Light by gospel-Discoveries; he makes the Precepts mighty in the Conscience, the Promises and Motives of the Gospel take hold on the Soul, insinuate into it, and inspire it with fix'd Resolutions, and Virtue to pursue them. The Spirit excites and improves those gracious Dispositions by the Word, which are most suitable to our present Duty; he brings seasonable Truths to remembrance, pleads them, darteth Light upon them, holds them as close and long to the Eye of the Mind, as is necessary to shew us our present work, and carry us through all the Difficulties of it; being thus led by the Spirit in the Word, and walking in him Gal. 5. 16. 18. by Obedience to his Conduct, we come to have our Conservation in Godly sincerity, and fulfill not the Lusts of the Flesh.

Thus I have explain'd how the Christian Conversation is led by the Grace of God, viz. by his special Favour, by inherent Grace, and by the Gospel of Grace, not by one without the other; nor without the special Favour of God; inherent Grace and the

Gospel were insufficient ; nay, we had not enjoy'd either ; di
not inherent Grace concur, this Conversation were not our wal
nor be made up of our Actings. And if it were not by the Go
spel, we had wanted a certain Rule for our Duty and hope, which
is necessary to Subjects of Moral Government, and been Enthus
iasts, or treated as meer Stocks : But that the best Man's Acting
by this Rule may not detract from the Glory of Divine grace
we see that all the influence of the Gospel upon our graces, and
the efficacy of those graces to our walking sincerely, depend on
the Operations of the Spirit, as well as they are the blessings mer
ited by Christ, which are obtain'd by such a Conversation.

2. Obs. *The way whereby a Christian Conversation become
evident to ones self, is by the Testimony of his Conscience.*

The Mind upon serious Reflections, and impartially compa
ring our Actings with a Rule, passeth Sentence, which Sen
tence is what is called its Testimony, as it refers to any unju
Challenge. The real Christian approveth himself to God, a
the Supreme Judge ; *he that judgeth me is the Lord.* I Cor. 4
4. He appeals to Men, as far as his outward Actings can mani
fest his Integrity : And he appeals to his own Conscience, and is
approved by it, as far as he knows his own Heart ; and this he
pleads against his own groundless Suspicions, and the unjust cen
sures of others.

For Explication of this consider,

1. The just Testimony of the Conscience is necessary to
right hope concerning the state of a Christian.

The Testimony is just, when 'tis according to the Gospel, a
a rule of Judgment, i. e. when upon enquiry that's found in us
and done by us, to which the Gospel promiseth Salvation ; and
we are acquitted of that against which it pronounceth eternal
Death. The Gospel-way of Comfort is to clear your Interest
in its Priviledges, by the Conscience witnessing to your Faith
and Obedience. None have a satisfying reason of their Hope
but such as have a good Conscience as to their Conversation in
Christ. I Pet. 3. 15, 16. Our Hearts must not condemn us,
Job. 3. 21. or we can have no confidence towards God.

2. The joint Witness of the Spirit with the Conscience, give
a satisfying comforting Power to the Testimony of the Consci
ence : *The Spirit it self beareth Witness with our Spirits, that w*

are the Sons of God. Rom. 3. 16. This Privilege here witnessed, supposeth a Witnessing to all that, without which this must be in-evident. Therefore the Spirit jointly witnesseth to the Truth of the Gospel, as to Christ's Satisfaction, and to those Promises founded thereon, which relax the Conditions of Adoption. He witnesseth to our performing of those Conditions ; not only by his working them in us, which is his Sealing *us* to be day of Redemption. Eph. 4. 30. This shall not disappoint : but yet it is not properly that joint-witnessing with the Conscience to the in-being of the Terms of Adoption ; for the Conscience does not witness thereto in such doubting Saints as prevailingly suspect it. But the Spirit jointly witnesseth with our Spirits : When both issue in this result, you have the Gospel infallible, Marks of the Sons of God.

Satan's suggestions, a consciousness of the deceit of our hearts, fear of what Powers of Corruption may be hid ; a Sense of what Restraints, or meer common Grace may effect, what Apostates have attain'd and done, &c. are sufficient to weaken the Testimony of Conscience when single, and obstruct our Comfortable Hope ; therefore the witness of the Spirit is necessary to be joyn'd with our Spirits to prevent our doubtings, quiet our Minds, and assure us of his Saving-Work upon us. It is by his Light shining on our Graces, that *our Consciences bear witness thereto in the Holy Ghost*. Rom. 9. 1. And his Manifestations and Power joyn'd to this Testimony of Conscience, do produce a Satisfaction in our Souls, that we have the Signs, and consequently to us belong the Priviledges of the Sons of God.

3. The matter attested by the Conscience is not legal Perfection, but *Sincerity of Grace and Obedience*.

It wou'd bear false witness, if it testify that we are innocent or perfect ; for, *if we say we have no Sin we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us*. 1 Joh. 1. 8. A Conversation by the Grace of God in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity is the heighth of what Paul pretends to, who elsewhere declares concerning himself, not as tho' I had already attained, or were already perfect. No, this is not the State or Season when *that which is perfect is come*, 1 Cor. 13. 10. but the Conscience witnesseth to Sincerity, to an Heart really bent for God, tho' not so firmly as the Christian wou'd find it. It truly believes, tho' he is forc'd to cry, *Lord help my unbelief*. Its Irreconcilable to Sin, tho' he oft complains of its violent Motions and Out-breakings ; it really like,

and approves of Perfection, and reckons that to be a Heaven indeed, where he hopes to obtain it : tho' to his Sorrow he finds much imperfection in all his Graces, and all his Actions. You may easily then collect, that this Sincerity principally consisteth, in the reality and truth, in what Graces we pretend, and the very Heart being engag'd in what good we perform ; and therefore it expresseth it self more in fervent desire, than attainments ; more in faithful endeavours, than Performances ; and oft more in the agreeableness of Spiritual Blessings, than in a joyful assurance that they belong to us.

3. Observation, *The just Testimony of Conscience to a Christian's Sincerity, is his rejoicing in the approaches of Death.*

This is our rejoicing : νοεῖς χαρίς notes joyful glorying. I shall 1st explain in what sence 'tis a Christian's rejoicing. 2. Evidence, that this is a sufficient ground of rejoicing in the greatest Danger, and nearest views of Death.

Quest. In what sence is the Testimony of Conscience to a Christian's Sincerity his Rejoicing ?

Answ. 1. Negatively. Not that Sincerity is any atonement for Sin, or any merit of Gospel-Blessedness, or any way to be set in the room of Christ.

There be too many Faults in the best Men, to admit their Justification by the Law of Innocency. And having once sinned, all just pretence of Merit is excluded. The Work of Satisfaction for Sin, and of meriting imputation of Blessings, are proper to Christ: This he has discharg'd alone, according to his Father's appointment, and that's suppos'd in all Gospel-offers ; for had not he procur'd Peace, Pardon, Adoption and Glory ; he would not invite us to him for obtaining them, nor by them inforce his Call to Sinners. The exactest Conversation wou'd be abominable to God, *Heb. 10. 12, 14. Heb. 7. 27. Mat. 22. 2* and useless to the most excellent Persons, if pleaded in rivalry with Christ. A real Convert knows both Christ and himself too well, to glory over Christ, to whom he ascribes his entire Redemption ; humbly acknowledging his best Duties cannot atone for their own Crimes, and when he has done all, he is an unprofitable Servant, *Luke 17. 10.* As to Expiation and Purchase, all our rejoicing is in Christ Jesus, who is also our Intercessor, and Author of all our Graces and Abilities, as well as Priviledges.

2. Answ. Affirmatively : The Christian Rejoyceth in the evidence of Sincerity. A this answers to the Gospel-Promises of

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that Blessedness, which Christ hath merited. These he knows describes the Persons to whom the Promised Salvation belongs ; and discriminates them from all such, who shall not obtain it. And be brought them to his House, and rejoiced believing in God. Acts 16. 36. This Taylor under Convictions has ask'd our Apostle, What shall I do to be saved ? Paul answereth, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. The Taylor sincerely believed ; that put him into a state of Salvation, though he had not known it : But he had the Testimony of his Conscience, that he did believe in Sincerity before he could rejoice. For as the Promise gave him no ground of Joy in this Salvation as belonging to him, unless he truly believed in Christ : so while his faith was not evident to himself, his Interest in that Salvation was not evident to him, and consequently he could not rejoice, but continue trembling. But his Interest in Christ and Salvation being cleared, by his Conscience witnessing that he had believed in Christ in Sincerity, he rejoiced ; he rejoiced in Christ, and he rejoiced in his sincere Faith too ; he was glad of a Saviour and Salvation by him ; he was glad he was a sincere Believer, because such Believers only could obtain Salvation by Christ, and all Insincere Believers or Hypocrites were excluded. It was Faith unfeigned, it was Faith which worketh by Love, that Paul called him to ; it was such a Faith he rejoiced in, and it's observable that it's said, he washed their Wounds, brought them to his House, and set Meat before them, and then it is added, he rejoiced.

There's no inconsistency between rejoicing in Christ, and rejoicing in the Sincerity of our Graces and Actions, otherwise the Apostle in my Text greatly offended. I add further, no Man can upon Gospel grounds rejoice in one, unless he rejoice in the other too. How can we rejoice in our Sincerity if we rejoice not in Christ as our Saviour, who expiated our Sins, made Reconciliation between God and us, purchased our Salvation, works all in all by his Spirit, justifieth us by his Blood, and makes us and our Graces accepted ? Can we joy in our Sincerity and not in Christ, when our greatest sincerity can do none of those things ; and if Christ had not performed them, we had been eternally miserable, notwithstanding our sincerest works or graces ? on the other hand how can we rejoice in Christ if we rejoice not in our sincerity ? for they are for they are not all Hypocrites sure to perish, notwithstanding the All-sufficiency of Christ and that because they are Hypocrites ? Christ's Righteousness will

not save him whose *Faith is dead*. Matt. 23. 4. Must we not rejoice that we are not Hypocrites, Unbelievers and Apostates? Jam. 2. 24. 26. Yet this we cannot do without rejoicing in our Sincerity, whereby we are not such. Moreover, Christ is not ours, nor his saving Benefits ours, without Sincerity; for these are promised to sincere Believers, and to none else. We must therefore despise these Blessings, or doubt God's Promise, otherwise we must rejoice in our Sincerity, which distinguisheth us from such as the Promises belong not to. Finally can we love Christ, and not rejoice in our Sincerity, as his gift and resemblance? Though our Joy in the Sincerity of our Graces and Ways, is not so much for its intrinsic goodness, as for the place Christ has assign'd to it in the Gospel-Constitution.

Secondly, I shall evidence that this is a sufficient ground of rejoicing in the greatest dangers, and nearest views of Death.

1. Nothing can justly prevent the Joy of a sincere Christian. All just doubts must be from a suspicion of our Integrity; when this matter is clear'd, we disbelieve the very scope of the Gospel Revelation, if we rejoice not in the certainty of final Happiness: *For the Lord will give Grace and Glory, and no good thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly.* Psal. 84. 11.

If you object the Imperfections of your Graces, though true, I answer,

First, Happiness is by the Gospel expressly promised to the Sincerity of our Graces, and not to the legal Perfection of them. Eph. 6. 24. Grace, i. e. the special Favour of God including true Felicity, even the Christians perfected Happiness is so called, 1 Pet. 1. 13. *Hope to the end for the Grace that is to be brought unto you, at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.* Upon whom does the Spirit pronounce this Grace? He tells you, *on all them that love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity*; not in full Perfection: The like is intended in the Promises made to other Graces, as he that *believes hath everlasting Life*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. is this perfected Faith? No; the Spirit calls it *Faith unfeign'd*. There is a hearty reality in those Graces and Works, and so they are above what is a hearty reality in those Graces and Works, and so they are above what is a dead Image, or a Counterfeit of what's commanded: But yet they come short of that Perfection, which the Precept enjoyns.

Secondly, It's not unbecoming Christ to promise Happiness to the Sincere Christian, tho' Imperfect. When God dealt immediat-

with Perfect Man by a Law suited to his Condition, it was fit that the pro-
posed Reward shou'd be to *perfect Obedience as the Condition*; for remune-
rative *Justice* had so adjusted the Duty and Reward, that the last was to be of
itself, and to deprive him of Life whilst Obedient, had been incongruous. *Rom.*
4. Moreover, the promised Benefit was to be procured by his own Obedience,
and not purchased by another for him. But under the Gospel GOD deals with
us by a *Mediator*, who has answer'd the demands of essential *Justice* so fully,
that if Sinners were delivered without a change, it would not be impeach'd.
This Mediator has all saving Blessings in his hand, as *purchased by himself*, and
power to dispense them. If he made an offer of them to *all* Sinners, he must
make all partakers of them; or fix some *Conditions* in his offers, especially
if he will judge Men by the offer he makes. If he appoint Conditions they will
be such, as become him to ordain, both with respect to himself, and with respect
to the Sinner. And therefore they will be *really good*, and of a kind impro-
vable to that Perfection he design'd them hereafter; otherwise he wou'd not ap-
pear holy, nor pursue the *end* of his coming; which was to *restore G O D's Image* and Government, as well as to obtain Man's Impunity. They must give
some *Meetness* to receive and relish his Blessings, else these would be despised to
his Dishonour, and Man's Damage, who could not feel a *Happiness* in them,
or incentives to the Love and Service of this blessed Redeemer. *Sincerity* of
Grace agrees to all these, and whatever is *short* of it would palpably fail to do
it. But further, the Conditions would not be what exceeded the *Power* he found
gave to Men, at the time he design'd to invest them in the respective Ble-
ssings; for that must render the Offer *vain to all*, to the impeachment of his
Wisdom and Integrity; nor is it likely they should be so *Perfect*, as to exceed
his design in appointing them, which is not to expiate or merit, nor set Men
above a constant humble dependence on himself, for the pardon of their Defects,
and to render them acceptable on this side that Perfection of Heaven, for which
he is but preparing them in this Life.

Thirdly, We find the Imperfection of their Graces is still supposed in those
whom the Promises entitle to, and invest in, its saving Blessings.

Besides the recorded *Weaknesses* and *Faults* of the most eminent Saints, whom
G O D own'd for his reconciled Servants, and who were *assured* of Salvation,

Abraham, Peter, &c. we find other Reasons which demonstrate, that Sin-
nery was accepted, and *Imperfection* supposed to be consistent with it. I shall
note only a few; all G O D's Adopted, Justified People are commanded to
grow in Grace, 2 Pet. 3. 18. they are declared to have *true Grace*, and a call
to add to growth connotes it; 2 Pet. 1. 5. but there would be no need nor
room to grow in Holiness, if the Graces included in Sanctification were perfect.
Again, the most improved Saints on Earth are to pray for *Forgiveness* of
sin; this our Redeemer appoints in the Lord's-Prayer. Furthermore, all the
approved Sons of G O D meet with *Chastisements* at G O D's hand, to make
them partakers of his Holiness, and of the *Fruit of Righteousness*. Heb. 12. 10.
Not to mention the Apostle John's three Ranks of real Converts, *Little
children, Young Men, and Fathers*; nor Paul's Babes in Christ, and the
more *Perfect*, yet both united to him. 1 John. 2.

If we put these together, they will evidence that such as G O D approved
are real *Saints*, and truly gracious, attain'd to no higher than *Sincerity*;
and tho' their Graces and Actions were not perfect, they were really *Heirs* of the
Promises, and invested in saving Blessings as sincere Persons, notwithstanding

Imperfection. Yea, many of them the Holy Spirit celebrates as eminent for their Faith, Love, Fear of him, &c. and yet not perfect in any of these Graces

I am larger in Answering this Objection, because it's the most common Challenge to a Christian's Joy; and this being removed, the rest will admit a briefer Solution.

What can hinder the Rejoicing of that Man, who knows he is Sincere? You may rejoice, notwithstanding the exactness of the Law; for you are redeemed from the Curse of it: Gal. 3. 13. Nor will this be the Law by which you shall be judged. The Justice of GOD can be no Terror to you, for that is satisfied; yea, through Christ it is on your side, for it's written, *That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* Rom. 3. 26. Past Sins, however great and many, must not affright you, for they are washed away by the Blood of Christ; Rev. 1. 5. they shall not be imputed. Grieve for Sin as the worst Evil, but your sealed Pardon is ground of Joy when the Crime is most hateful and bemoan'd.

Remains of Corruption are burthen som, yet being consistent with Integrity, they ought not to prevent your thankful Rejoicing, for you are near a Release, and they shall not condemn you. Neither is there any reason that the Devil molest your Comforts, for you have Conquer'd him in the War, by abiding Faithful to the end; and shortly he who baffled you in many Skirmishes shall be trodden under your Feet. Rom. 16. 20. Death is the last Enemy, but where Covenant-Sincerity is evident, you may not only Rejoyce, but you may Glory over it, for Pardon has removed its Sting, and it's become friendly notwithstanding your natural Aversion to it. Look beyond it, whence its greatest Terrors came, and you'll find, it leads you to Regions of Light and Joy, so that you may with the Apostle triumph over it; O death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? Thanks be to GOD who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15. 55, 57. Is there cause for Fear or Sadness? that this vile Body, which is the chief Seat of Sin, is sown to rise a Spiritual Glorious Body; and in the mean time, your JESUS the Lord of the other World, will receive your Spirits freed from all Defilement, and lodge them among the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

Thus you find that the Joy which Sincerity affords, is not to be prevented by imperfection of Graces, the Law of Works, the Justice of GOD, past Sins, remains of Corruption, nor the Terrors of Death: But if I have not enumerated all, you'll find the Apostle leaves out no hindrance of your Joy unremov'd: *Neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Powers; things present, things to come, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus.* Rom. 8. 33, to 39.

2. This Testimony witnesseth to our Interest in all those things which Minister the truest Joy to a rectify'd Soul.

A review of a Christian Conversation is a Pleasure, not only as it prevent Horror and Danger, and was in it self delightful, as well as useful to others. But the principal Comfort of it is, that it affords a prospect of all that's necessary to our final consummate Happiness. For it assures us of our union with Christ, who is Lord of the unseen World, and that he is to be our Judge. We behold all his Merits pleading for us, and all those incomprehensible things which he pray'd for in John 17. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26. belong to us, and shall be in us fulfilled. We shall be fully sanctify'd, made one in the Father and Son, as the Father is in the Son; possess that Glory which Christ re-

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ceived; be with Christ to behold his Glory; and that Love be in us where
with he was loved of the Father. *Faith in an unseen Jesus now yields a Joy un-
speakable and full of Glory, by receiving the fore-tastes of Salvation* 1 Pet. 1.
8, 9. And well it may, when we read that Prayer of our Lord foretelling our

Need I subjoin that assurance is given us, that Christ will receive our Spirits,
to present them as glorious and unspotted as is befitting his Spouse and the
members of his Body. Eph. 5. 27. Our Souls shall be perfected in Light and
Love, and our Bodies made like his Glorious Body, which shined with such a
lustre in his *Transfiguration*. This is a Testimony, that our names are writ-
ten in the *Book of Life*, that the unfading *Crown of Glory* shall eternally rest
on our heads, and we shall be admitted to drink of those *Rivers of Pleasures*
which are at Gods right hand. Ps. 16. 11. Who can forbear rejoicing in
dying Pangs and Pains? when he beholds himself so near a full deliverance
from all that grieved him, and the full and endless enjoyment of all his de-
fires; yea his enlarged Faculties being filled with all that's agreeable to a mind
divinely refined.

3. The interest of every sincere Christian in all this, is abundantly secured,
and infallibly sure.

The least uncertainty about things so dear to us, would shake our Comfort
and diminish our joy. The Concern is of such moment, that our Minds can't
be at full rest, unless our Joy be sustain'd by uncommon supports, especially
when just going into Eternity. Our gracious Father considered our Frame,
and provided that we might have strong Consolation, and firm and steadfast
ground for our hope; therefore besides his Word, in which it is impossible for
him to lie, he confirmed it with an Oath: Heb. 6. 17. 19, 20. Yea he shews,
us within the Veil, the J E S U S our forerunner entred for us, i. e. as our
Head to take possession, and prepare a place for us, and be the first Fruits, and
pledg of our entring into that glorious State. Joh. 14. 3. What a Foundation
of Triumph is this!

He has also added Seals to his Covenant for greater Confirmation, and
given us his Son for a Surety of it, even that Son who so Loved us as to die in
our stead, and has a concern of great glory in our Salvation. Heb. 7. 22. Be-
sides the assurance given us by the Gospel-Covenant, he hath revealed so much
of his Covenant of Redemption with our Mediator, as to let us see the certainty
of our being justified by the Knowledge (or Faith) of Christ, and that his
Sufferings are imputed to us as our plendable Severity. Isa. 53. 11. These
things with the shedding of his Love in our Hearts, and the experience we
already have of his Truth and Love, strengthen our joy by the Impossibility
of a Disappointment.

4. He'll find that nothing without this will afford joy in a dying Hour, or
in Eternity. When you behold your Rishes vain, your Friends useless and all
the World emptiness itself; It will be a solid comfort, that you have Bread to
eat which the World knows not, you have what do support and refresh you,
even lively hopes in a dying Hour, and all above and within Peace, upon
the Evidence of Sincerity; whereas your profession without Sincerity, your
greatest performances without Sincerity, your Gospel enjoyments and Gifts
without Sincerity, must appear too insignificant and weak to bear up your
Souls. What joy must it be, that God has made you upright! And that he
approves your appeal to him, that the Graces you had, tho' small, were yet

sincere ; and your walk was in Integrity tho' full of imperfections. Moreover in Eternity you'll see that not only profession, and hopes but Christ himself will be of no saving use to Hypocrites, how then may your Hearts rejoice : That the Spirit of Christ fashioned your Hearts aright, that the Fruits of the Spirit in you were all in truth ; Eph. 5. 9. and so he prevented that Hypocrisy, by which the foolish Virgins, and the Man without the Wedding-Garment do perish Eternally.

Exhortation. 1. Be all perswaded to take this Course for your rejoicing under the Sentence of Death. See that Conscience can give you this Testimony, that your Conversation has not been with Fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity. Its not long before Death will certainly arrest you, now is the time of preparing for the reviews of Conscience, and it will give some Testimony, whether you will or no. Self-love will awaken it to speak upon the approaches of Eternity, unless by Stupidness, you carry the plainest mark of your Damnation.

It will judge with another light, closeness, and power than at present. For the awfull views of GOD's Bar, of Heaven and Hell, when so near you ; will try the Testimony which Conscience now giveth at another rate than you can imagine in Health. Many will find Conscience blast their former Peace, and to revoke its own flattering Sentence which it gave when asleep by spiritual Sloth, or bribed by Lust.

It will judge then, not by mens opinion, but by the Gospel Rule. It will arraign not a few particular acts, but the scope of your lives. It will search your very Inwards, Prov. 20. 27 the frame of your Hearts ; your prevailing ends in what good you performed ; and not Sentence only by External Actions. It will take Cognizance of your private Works, and remember much that you now forget ; yea mark many things, for Faults which you accounted innocent. It will baffle many of those excuses, which it now allows ; and despise many things, by which you think your crimes extenuated. On such accounts, you'll find need of utmost Care in so ordering your Conversation, as to find the Testimony of your Consciences affording you ground of joy in a dying hour. But if it justly pass Sentence against you, death will be a King of Terrors : If it brand you as Hypocrites, How much more will GOD condemn you, who it greater than your Conscience ? John 3. 20. greater in Light and Purity, to find matter of Accusation ; and greater in power, to fasten Conviction on the Mind, and to enflame it with the sense of Guilt and Danger.

Exhort. 2. Frequently examin your state in Health, and do it also when you soon expect to die. If you oft examin your selves in Health, it will tend to your eternal Safety ; for if you perceive your danger, you will be awakned to prevent it, by improving the proper seasons. Nor will it be a small help to your rejoicing in the Testimony which Conscience gives on a Death-bed, that it is what has been often examined, and at leisure. Whereas its a sign that Man's Condition is not good, who never tries it ; for this declares him too stupid, and careless about his Salvation, to be a living Saint. And if you begin this Self-trial on a Death-bed, you'll find a state so long neglected can scarce yield good grounds for a comfortable Sentence ; and the Conscience will be unfit to pass any just Sentence, because unaccustomed, and unskilfull in trying and judging of your Condition. Oft then Try your own selves ; 2 Cor. 13. 5. you'll find on a Sick-bed there was use and need of doing it oft. One time may rectifie the mistakes of another, at least what past a frequent enquiry will be more confirm'd

Neglect not to examine it over again on a Death-bed, take the advantage of its awaking views, and of the nearer approaches GOD usually makes to the Soul, when half separated from the Body. If a rejoicing Testimony will bear the sight of GOD's Bar at hand, your Comfort will be established. If it should prove false there's more hope in applying to Christ for your Conversion on a Sick-Bed (however suspicious it be) than after Death.

Exhort. 3. Be careful that the Testimony of your Conscience be *true and just*.

It may be, yea too often is false. The Hypocrites ungrounded hopes are founded in a lying Conscience, and the *unjust* Tears of a Sincere Christian, proceed from a mistaken Conscience. The Hypocrite is hereby secure in a bad state, which he neglects to alter in his day of Grace; and thereby his eternal Misery is more grievous, as he is disappointed, and also ashamed of his Folly; because the grounds of his Hopes were so easily discernable to be weak and false; had he been true to himself.

The Doubting Christian's mistakes shall not hazard his Salvation; because its the Sentence of Christ which is *decisive*; and that will be according to the Truth of every Man's Case; and not the *mistaken* Opinion of Men. But yet his Doubts abate his Rejoicing, as long as they prevail. They oft hinder his growth, by causing him to spend that time in useless Complaints, which ought to be employ'd in growing in Grace, whereby it wou'd become more visible. He discourageth weak Saints, and too oft proves a Stumbling-block to the Wicked.

I call each of you to be solicitous that Conscience give a right Testimony, seeing error in this Affair is so fatal. To help you in this, take these *Directions*. Be solemn and *impartial* in our Search; pray the Spirit to witness with your Spirits, and strictly avoid whatever provokes him to withhold his Testimony. The Hypocrite needs this for his effectual *Conviction*. The Believer needs it for his Comfort. *Job. 16. 1.* Again, be sure the *Rule* you try be just and sufficient to decide your Case, when Sentence passeth. Nothing below the Gospel is the true Rule; and therefore conclude, you must be free from all that against which the Gospel pronounceth *Death*; and what this promiseth *Life* to, be and do in *Truth*. That which is most obvious and sure to give in as *Evidence* is my Text as before Explain'd; for inward *Habits* are not so plain, and without a sincere Conversation, they are in vain pretended; nor can they be wanting where this is maintain'd to the end.

The *Text* as I have explain'd it, will give you three Cautions which are useful to prevent a false Sentence in favour of Hypocrisy.

1. See that what you do esteem to be godly *Acts*, be perform'd by the Grace of GOD. 2. That the *Scope* of your *whole* Conversation be directed with a *sincere* respect to GOD, and to his Will, and not by *Fleshly Wisdom*.

3. That what Faults you are chargeable with be not *inconsistent* with Godly Sincerity. You are to mourn for, and faithfully endeavour to reform all Faults; but let those that seem by their power and interest in your Hearts to be a challenge to Sincerity; strike deep in your Concern to mortify them, that you be not deceived.

4. *Exhortation*, What just Testimony your Conscience gives, receive it, and be suitably affected. If it be true and plain *against you*, as a Hypocrite, cast away your false *Hopes*, apply to thyself the *Threatnings* of the Gospel, bereave you to *Christ* for Healing; lie with humility in the way of the Spirit, duly attending on the *means* of Grace; and be much in *Prayer* for his Regenerating Grace, longing to receive it, and ready to improve all that tends thereto.

But if the Testimony be for you, be thankful to G O D, be enlarged in his ways and account it your duty to rejoice. Maintain this joy against all Challenges, by fresh applications to Christ ; yea quit it not, unless you prove such backsliders, as to have reason to question your integrity. This Testimony when just is recorded above, and of that use, that no temptation should hinder your saying with him, *I will not remove my integrity from me ; my Righteousness I hold fast, I will not let it go.* Job 27. 5. 6.

The Character in the Text belonged as much, and was exemplified as plainly in our worthy Brother deceased, as in most. He well understood, that is joy in a dying Hour must (in Subordination to Christ) depend on the practice of it. That he might bind his Soul the faster, and with more freedom derive strength from Christ to perform it ; he solemnly subscribed a Covenant with his G O D. For the stricter observing his conversation, he kept a Diary, that by a review he might gain Experience, and rectifie Mistakes : But this, I fear is destroy'd.

He entred betimes into Heaven's way, and held it to the last ; nor repenting his Choice, tho' oft bewailing his Imperfections. How may this encourage young Converts to persevere ! What a Crown of Glory is it to the hoary head to be thus found in the ways of Righteousness ; your Pastor was Aged Seventy Seven Years, and with old Polycarpus declared, that tho' I have long served him, I have always found him a good Master, and therefore I cannot forsake him. Undefiled Religion was his busines : to his utmost he promoted this in others : to express the Power of it he applied himself, both as a Christian and as a Minister. As a Christian, his Conversation was of a piece, regulated by the word of GOD, which he professed to set always before him, and this appear'd in his private Behaviour, his walk in his House, and the Discharge of relative Duties : he refus'd not the Burthen he bound on others, and confirm'd his Doctrine by his Practice. *Fleshy Wisdom* was not his Guide, but so far from tricking, that he was rather too blunt and plain.

None more importunate in pressing holy Diligence, and few express'd a more humble Dependance on the Grace of Christ ; which he knew how to make consistent in his Practice and Doctrine too. His Crosses, which were neither few nor small, he endur'd with submissive Patience. He too much affected privacy, I say too much, because his publick Usefulness was thereby lessen'd as to some instances : For this he Apologiz'd (when blam'd) by his unfitness to walk, with some other Reasons. Yet he made his Advantage of it, by closer converses with his own Heart, and better preparations for his publick Labours. But what past between G O D and his own Soul, he studiously conceal'd from an humble Modesty, or we had known more of what water'd and warm'd that Root, which brought forth such affectionate, lively, and abundant Fruit in his Ministry, which cou'd not be vail'd. This leads me to speak of him as a Minister of the Gospel. He was Skilful in his Work, being greatly fitted to divide the Word aright, and to common Edification. He was Sound in the Faith, except Men will call him Heterodox, for avoiding Extremes, or for more aptly expressing Truths than Men less accurate, or less honest, chuse to do ; or for holding such Positions as are necessary to make his Preaching consistent with it self, and conducive to the Ends of its Institution. He managed his Ministerial Work with Christian Sincerity.

It was not after the Flesh he Preached ; for tho' his Learning was great, it was not with the Wisdom of Mans Words that he dispensed the Truth of the Gospel ; well knowing, that such affectation was not likely to be attended with the Divine Blessing ; and that such Words in themselves are unapt to edify the

greater part of our Auditors, if any. He Preached as one believing wath said ; one fearing the aweful account he was to give, and sensible that the nsequences of his Ministrations were too great to be trifled about. The apsons of his Warfare, were not Carnal but Spiritual, mighty thro' God, to pulling down of strong Holds. Scripture Revelation in Scripture Language, imed the Substance of his Discourses, tho' he negle&ted not to reason strong, on Subjects determinable by the Light of Nature.

Carnal Advantages had no power over the Dictates of his Conscience. He chose to be ejected out of his Parish Alphage, without any Prospect of a subsistence for his poor Family, rather than Conform against his Light. Fidelity to God made him prefer Reproaches, Contempt Poverty and Persecution, before Honour and Plenty, in a way he apprehended sinful. The same Temper cover'd it self in his avoiding all carnal shifts to enrich himself, when a Non-conformist. He neither courted nor flatter'd the Rich, undermined not his ethren, preach'd not smooth things. He urged Gospel Precepts, when no teaching would please many, if it insisted on any Duty. He preach'd Privileges in a right Season and fit Manner, as motives to Sinners to close with Christ, & not as Pillows to make them secure, by neglecting to tell them, they belonged not to them whilst unconverted. He preach'd them as an encouragement to hints for obedience and growth, but he call'd them to clear their Interest by scripture Signs, and taught them the Duties, which Benefits were inducements to perform. He preached Christ in all his Offices, and tho' explain'd what Christ did suffer'd, yet did not preach as if Christ's expiatory work were unfinish'd, or that his dying would save Sinners in their Impenitency ; or as if Christ were still in his humble State, without a Throne, whence he gave forth his Commands, and without a Kingdom wherein he ruled by Laws and Power, and without a Tribunal, before which all Men good and bad must stand and be judged. No, he preach'd the Gospel of the Cross and of the Kingdom too.

He preach'd as one knowing both God and Man ; as knowing God, and thence unneed not to declare his whole Counsel ; what he declares and what he requires ; conditional Promises to Grace, and the absolute Promises of Grace. As knowing Men, and therefore impressed their hope and fear in his calls to them, comfortably to the Ministry of Christ, and all his faithful Messengers, who pluck'd the Gospel-Call with Promises and Threatnings. One Reason why this excellent Person was a Bonnages, oft setting before Men God's Threatnings, was, that where the Gospel is Historically believed, unregenerated Men are apt to be secure Hypocrites : For they believe that Christ died for our Sins, and that God is ready to forgive them, and will forgive all who believe. These Men being Baptiz'd, wearing the Christian Name, and taking an Historical temporary Faith for saving Faith, they flatter themselves, that all the Privileges of the Gospel and Salvation belong to them : This caused him to pluck Men as brands out of the burning, and to persuade them, as knowing the Terrors of the Lord ; that their blood might not lie at his Door, by not warning them of their Danger. His Sincerity by the Grace of God mad his Labours abundant, breathing forth a zeal for God in each. He train'd up several young Men, (among whom his worthy Son is one) for the Ministry, most of whom shine as eminent Lights in the Church. His pains in Catechising were great, to which he urged Ministers, for the propogating of knowledge, establishment in the truth, and preparing Persons for saving advantage by the Ministry. He Printed many Books for common benefit, and with great acceptance, as the many editions of that of the Sa-

erament manifest. Who preach'd more Sermons, or with equal fervor, in the midst of Weakness? yea Pains must quite disable him; or they could not keep him out of the Pulpit; a Life prolong'd to unusefulness was a burthen he deprecated as the greatest Trial. God favour'd his zealous diligence and sincerity; he prevented his fear of out living his usefulness; Fifty three years he serv'd Christ in the Gospel, yet he remained capable of service to his last Week. The very Sabbath before his Death he preach'd, and Catechiz'd with great vigour His zeal carried him to build the first Meeting-House in London, and thereby open'd the way for many Ministers, with more freedom to enter upon greater Service. This faithful Servant of Christ is the last of the London Ministers ejected by that sad *Act of Uniformity*; few of whom had more Seals to their Ministry, tho' all of them were too useful to be silent'd for uninstituted Inventions without such Guilt as requires Repentance, before England be secure. His laborious life is come to an end, but then signal kindness did not forsake him; he had oft among other things desir'd that he might be able to say at Death, *peace was made with God*, his Request was answer'd in that as well as in the rest. For being desir'd when speechless to signify his satisfaction as to his eternal State by lifting up his Hand, he readily lifted up his Hand. *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright, for the end of that Man is Peace.*

You his People have acquitted your selves to your Pastor with great affection and esteem, when the ministerial Office is generally despis'd: You have kept fast in a giddy Age, and liv'd in Peace amidst too many broken Churches yet seriously remember, you have many helps to account for, and must persevere, unless you have begun in vain. It's ground of thankfulness that his recoveries were so frequent, and that God respited his precious life so long. Nevertheless, to be bereav'd of him while he remain'd so useful, is a rebuke, and must be a cause of Grief to you, who have lost him in an experient'd Guide; one who was acquainted with the state of your Souls, able to resolve your doubts, and obviate your temptations. He is departed who was a Father to many of you, and affectionately lov'd you as his Children. You have lost one who pray'd for you his many Prayers are on Record for your welfare, which always lay near his heart. You'll hear no more his importunate calls to awaken you when trouble and distress. You'll see him no more, till you meet in the other World; to prepare you for which, his labours were so abundant, and well-fitted. To that World you are hastning after him. Death is not far from any of you, look all to it, that he be not found a Witness against any of you for your unprofitableness; which he may be if you be found graceless Hypocrites, notwithstanding a Name to live. But how great will your mutual satisfaction prove in the Great Day! when you are found to be his rejoicing and his Crown. Such of you as were very nearly related to him as a Father in the flesh, are highly oblig'd to honour his Name by Christian Walk. Remember his Dedication of you, by performing your Vow. Answer his care in your education, by a sound Judgment and Holiness of Life; be also solicitous that the unfeigned Religion which descended to you, be industriously propagated to your Offspring. I heartily pray, that we surviving Ministers may have a supply of that Spirit, by which he with the other ejected Ministers were such common blessings, in their solid Judgment, truly profitable Labours, serious Self-denying Spirits, and a sincere Conversation. *May all your People, your Relations, and we Ministers, remember to follow him in Faith and Sincerity, considering the end of his Conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, who with other of his Ministers are fallen asleep.*

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